



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Rural Development
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USDA Rural Development Offers Office Hours in Raleigh County

Morgantown, WV – February 9, 2006: State Director Robert M. Steptoe, III today announced that in an effort to accommodate more rural West Virginians, Rural Development will hold office hours in Beckley, Raleigh County, WV, every Wednesday of the month, effective immediately.

Rural Development will be available in the USDA Agricultural Service Center located at 471 Ragland Road, Beckley, WV (telephone 304.252.4343; fax 304.252.5809; TTY/TDD 304.284.4836) from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Representatives will be available to discuss Rural Development programs with the public, take applications and assist existing customers. You can also contact Rural Development in the Princeton office at 241 Mercer Springs Road, Suite A, Princeton, WV 24740 (304.487.1402; fax 304.425.0695; TTY/TDD 304.284.4836).

Rural Development serves as the lead Federal entity for rural development needs and administers program assistance through its rural housing programs, rural business programs, and rural utilities programs. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

Further information on USDA Rural Development may be obtained by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>. In West Virginia, call 1-800-295-8228 to be put in touch with the appropriate personnel serving your county. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotope, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202.720.2600 (voice and TDD).

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Committed to the future of rural communities.

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To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD).